



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0417GA-1 for Dodge County Board of Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	3
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education in partnership with Telfair and Wheeler County Board of Education described demographics, proposed diverse range of activities, identified the purpose, and identified the four assurances. However, the section did not describe a vision of how these diverse activities would be coherently implemented to address the goals of accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, and increasing equity. Nor did the proposal describe how the proposed activities link to the educational assurance areas and what the consortium has done in the past in these four areas and how the proposal builds on past activities. Overall, this section receives a low medium rating.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	9
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposal indicated that all nine schools would participate in the project as all nine schools collectively met the eligibility requirements. In addition, the proposal identified that the project would implement system-wide strategies to reforms that included the four assurances. (b) The proposal identified the names of the schools. (c) The proposal indicated the total numbers and percentages of participating students for each required student group and the total number of participating educators. Overall, the rating for this section is high.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposal presented a basic logic model summary that included inputs, activities, outputs, and general short-term and long-term outcomes. There were not enough specific details to clearly articulate the relationship between the activities, outputs, and the outcomes (e.g., how would the output of social services/families support services result in the short-term outcomes of improved performance on summative assessments). All of the activities and outputs resulted in the same short-term and long-term outcomes. The logic model did not define what would constitute "innovative" college and career readiness programming in this section. The logic model identified general goals (e.g. increase graduation rate, increase college enrollment rate) while the tables under A.4. presented measurable goals. The action plan included activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties. Overall, the rating for this section is low medium.</p>		
(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposed four general goals modeled after the state's ESEA targets that align with the sub-criterion.</p> <p>(a) Performance on summative assessments: The proposal stated that for the CRCT, they followed the state rate of increasing 1% if the districts met or exceeded the state's target. For the EOCT, they used the state targets and increased 1% as determined by the state. The proposal presented tables summarizing yearly goals for summative assessments.</p> <p>(b) Decreasing achievement gaps: Two of the counties presented summary goals of performance of student groups in reading, math, science, and social studies by schools and grade levels. Two counties had comparative goals between white/black, white/economically disadvantaged, white/SWD, and white/ELL. While the achievement gaps decreased, the gaps still remained across the four years. One county presented overall summary of goals of performance by students groups in reading, math, science, and social studies. While the performance increased each year for each student group, the achievement gaps still remained across the four years.</p>		

(c) Graduation Rates: For overall graduation rate goals, the following yearly increases were proposed: one county 3%, one county 1.6%, and one county 2% in the first year but this rate remained steady for two years. The proposal followed the state's targets but did not try to accelerate the growth of their students given that their baseline data was below the state's targets. Regarding graduation rate goals for black and white students, two of the three counties proposed different graduation rates. For economically disadvantaged students, proposed changes in graduation rates were projected to increase at the most 3% each year, with one county projecting 37% by the end of the grant period. For students with disabilities, one county provided no goals, and the other two counties projected 3.5% to 4.0% growth each year with students still graduating significantly below other student groups by the end of the project period. For English language learners, two of the three counties did not identify any goals, with one county projecting 1.6% increase each year.

(d) College enrollment data was not available but the projected goals increased by: 3% for two counties while the third county did not identify any goals.

Overall, the goals appeared achievable but not ambitious and therefore this section is rated Medium.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Dodge County Board of Education proposal only provided data for overall graduation rates for 2010-11 but not across the four years. The 2010-11 graduation rates for the three counties fluctuated between 68.9% to 86.5%. No data was provided for college enrollment rates. In order to calculate record of success across four years, it was necessary to review the presented yearly data and then determine the record across the four years. Regarding Adequate Yearly Progress data across four years, each of the counties fluctuated between meeting and not meeting AYP at the elementary, middle school, and high school levels. Only one of the three school districts met AYP in 2010-11 at all levels: elementary, middle, and high school. There was one reference to one elementary school meeting AYP for eight consecutive years and earning Title I Distinguished School award for six consecutive years. Looking at the State's education scoreboard across the four years, each of three counties evidenced fluctuating performance on: 3rd grade, 4th grade, 5th grade, 6th grade, and 7th grade achievement. One county evidenced steady growth on 8th grade writing achievement. All three counties evidenced steady increases on science achievement. As far as 9th grade on-track rate, two of the three counties had fluctuating performance while one county evidenced steady increases.</p> <p>(b) The proposal did not identify if schools were low performing nor did it address achieving reforms in low performing schools. It also did not provide AYP status for each of its nine schools.</p> <p>(c) The proposal described in general terms how they would make student performance data available to students, educators, and parents but not how it would inform and improve participation, instruction, and services other than classroom teacher discussions and grade level/department meetings. This section needed more specific details.</p> <p>Overall, the rating for this section is low medium.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education Consortium indicated that they follow the State salary schedule and that information was available on the state's website. While they proposed to create a website that would link to the state's website, there was insufficient description of whether the state's website makes available the four categories of school-level expenditures. There was also insufficient evidence of transparency for LEA processes and practices. There was insufficient details on how they would make this information available. Overall, the rating for this section is medium.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
<p>(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education Consortium generally described the state context referencing the new educator evaluation systems without specific details on the successful conditions and autonomy that would support personalized learning</p>		

environments. More specific details were needed to describe the existing conditions and autonomy that districts have for personalized learning environments. Overall, this section received a low rating.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

10

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Dodge County Board of Education Consortium described how their stakeholders were involved in the development of the proposal. The process included workgroups which reviewed strategic plans and other relevant data (online surveys of staff and students), and received input from the local Regional educational service agency and the state education agency. (ii) There was evidence of at least 70% of teachers from participating schools supporting the proposal. (b) There were extensive numbers of letters of support representing government officials and agencies, schools, community organizations and businesses, and parents in each county. Overall, this section received a high rating.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Dodge County Board of Education Consortium described demographics and needs. In some instances they provide statements of needs but not the data for the need (e.g., no data on the impact of the lack of local mental health services on students). There was no description of analyses of student achievement data and achievement gaps that would lead to specific proposed activities. They did not specifically identify the root causes of why over 25% of their local ninth grade students drop out of school and what they have done to address this. The proposal appeared to conceptualize personalized learning environment with needing a Response to Intervention model. Overall, this section received a low medium rating.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	7
<p>(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposed a plan that included: For all students: universal Response to Intervention screenings for all students, social services/family support services, school based mental health services, increases in instructional days, afterschool and summer programming and differentiated academic software in math and STEM for grades 3-12 and innovative college and career readiness programming for middle and high school students. The plan includes activities, timelines, deliverables, and responsible parties but the action plan summary did not provide enough details. The plan and description only addresses how students will be involved in college and career readiness programming to address sub-criterion (i) through (iii) while the other activities do not. There was no specific details related to (iv) and (v). The proposal generally described the Response to Intervention approach but with insufficient detail as to the current level of implementation of the model in what academic and/or behavioral areas within schools and the numbers of students currently being assisted. They presented proposals for each county's approach to RtI screening and instruments they would use. They generally described options for services based on screening, but it was not clear whether all schools would implement all of the services at the same time, how the schools would implement some of the services (e.g., STEM academy) and which students would participate in the services. The activities do not appear differentiated for specific schools and student groups.</p> <p>(b) It was not clearly delineated in the proposal which strategy/activity addressed the sub-criteria of (b). The proposed strategy Accelerated math software appeared to address sub-criterion (i). (ii) There was no descriptions of the variety of instructional approaches and environments that would be implemented beyond the Accelerate math software and the STEM academy software and afterschool and summer programming. (iii). The specific content mentioned in the proposal included: math, STEM, and core subjects in the Individual Graduation Plan. There was a reference to Common Core under the screening assessments. (iv). The proposal primarily described the use of the RTI screenings three times a year and the academic related software as the processes for providing ongoing and regular feedback. (v) There were no descriptions of accommodations and high-quality strategies for high-need students.</p> <p>(c) There was no description of the mechanisms that would provide training and supports to students to track and manage their learning.</p> <p>Overall, this section received a rating of low medium.</p>		
(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)	20	4

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposed the primary approach of improving teaching and learning by hiring full-time instructional coaches for each of the participating schools and the implementation of the educator evaluation system. There were no specific plans for improving teaching and learning in specific academic subjects through professional development, professional learning communities, study groups, etc other than through the coaches. While the coaches would provide staff development to teachers, there were insufficient details on how participating educators would engage specifically in training and professional learning communities to address effective implementation of (a)(i) through (iii). There were general references to research-based strategies and implementation of the school improvement plan. There were detailed descriptions of the state's new evaluation system and provision of feedback which will be implemented in 2013-14.

(b) There was no specific evidence of how participating educators would have access to resources, other than through the instructional coaches, that would: (i) accelerate student progress and respond to individual student needs and interests; (ii) provide learning resources; and (3) provide processes and tools to match student needs.

(c) There was general descriptions of how the evaluation system would inform school leaders and the leadership teams for: (i) continuous school improvement and (ii) closing achievement gaps.

(d) There was no evidence of a high quality plan for specifically increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective/highly effective teachers and principals in hard-to staff schools, subjects, and specialty areas.

Overall, this section received a low rating.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	5

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Dodge County Board of Education Consortium described the organizational framework and governance structure for the project as well as for each county and participating school. Key project management positions were also identified and described. (b) However, there was no description of how school leadership teams would have flexibility and autonomy over factors such as schedules and calendars, staffing models, roles, and responsibilities and budgets. (c) The proposal mentioned that students would have opportunities to progress but with no specific details on when and how these opportunities would be implemented. (d) While the proposal mentioned the sub-criterion, there were no details on how these would be implemented. (e) The proposal repeated the sub-criterion, but did not provide any details. Therefore, this section received a low medium rating.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	4
--	----	---

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposal: (a) repeats the sub-criterion but does not identify how access will be provided in and out of school. (b) repeats the sub-criterion but does not identify levels of support or strategies. (c) identifies and describes the current student information system and the plans for a student tracker system. (d) describes the state's longitudinal data system as it relates to student data but does not describe the system for human resources data, budget data, or instructional improvement system data. Overall, this section receives a low medium rating.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	3

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposes a process that identifies persons responsible and timelines, but does not include information on what data will be collected regarding project goals and opportunities and what specifically will they be monitoring other than project goals and opportunities. It also did not identify how the applicant would monitor, measure, and publicly share the quality of investments, such as in professional development, technology, and staff. The proposal does

not represent a rigorous process. Overall, this section received a low rating.		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education Consortium identified timelines for each project level (internal stakeholders) in terms of communication and engagement. But it did not describe whether communication would be one-way or two-ways. Strategies for communicating with external stakeholders were generally described. Overall, this section received a medium rating.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Performance measures for all applicants: Dodge County Board of Education Consortium proposed 13 performance measures. There was a listing of the performance measures but not a rationale. The other performance measures included: high school graduation rates, attendance (which was listed for PreK-12 twice, once for grades 4-8, and once for grades 9-12), third grade and grades 4-8 reading, students in grade 9-12 who pass the ELA state exam, students on track for college and career readiness (grades 4-8 and 9-12), and numbers of students completing and submitting FAFSA form. Even though the proposal listed two performance measures related to teacher and principal effectiveness, the initial Tables a and b was completed with N/A. There was a note that the state is in the process of establishing an evaluation system that will allow districts to accurately identify the percentages of teachers and principals who are highly effective. However, it was noted that the State would launch this system in SY 2014. The section included tables with performance measures, baseline, and targets for each of the performance measures. Tables were fully completed by one county, while two counties completed targets but did not identify the number of participating students with a note that it was due to fluctuating enrollment. In some instances, the tables also indicated that they did not have the data for specific student groups. When comparing the performance measures to the goals, discrepancies were noted in high school graduation rates for one county, while another county identified goals but did not complete the performance measures for high school graduation rate and student attendance PreK-12th grade.</p> <p>(b) This section did not include a description of how the measures would provide rigorous, timely, and formative information to the plan and theory of action.</p> <p>(c) This section did not include a description of how the performance measures would be reviewed over time if it was insufficient to gauge progress.</p> <p>Given the above comments, this section received a rating of Low Medium.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	1
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Dodge County Board of Education Consortium did not present a plan to evaluate effectiveness of investments. They referred to the evaluation of professional development and technology activities but did not describe how these would be evaluated. They mentioned that they would monitor the quality and fidelity of implementation of reforms but they did not specifically describe who, when, and how they would monitor specific reforms. They did not identify how effectiveness will be determined. Overall, this section received a low rating.</p>		

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	6
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) Dodge County Board of Education Consortium budget identifies total grant funds requested, but does not identify any other funds (e.g., LEA, State, or other Federal funds). No indirect costs were requested. (b) Personnel salaries and most of the other costs appeared reasonable and sufficient. (c) (i)The consortium provided a rationale for a description of all grant funds. The costs for teachers' salaries, benefits, and retirement for ten instructional days(student classroom learning time) was incorrectly identified under training stipends rather than personnel section. According to directions, the training stipend line item only pertains to costs associated with long-term training programs and college or university coursework, not workshops or short-term training supported by the program.(ii) The budget narrative identified funds that will be used for one-time investments and</p>		

ongoing operational costs. Overall, this section received a medium rating.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<div>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Dodge County Board of Education Consortium did not present a plan for sustainability, rather the proposal focused on generally what they would do to pursue additional funding and covering costs such as office space and technology. They did not describe how the reforms would be integrated into LEA policies, procedures, and practices. Overall, this section received a low rating.</div>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
<div>Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: Not applicable</div>		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
<div>Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: Based on the comments and ratings of each of the sections, the Dodge County Board of Education proposal did not meet absolute priority 1.</div>		

Total	210	78
-------	-----	----

Application #0417GA-1 for Dodge County Board of Education as reviewed by Beverly Mattson

Signatures

<div>_____ Reviewer Signature</div>	<div>Beverly Mattson _____ Reviewer Name (Print)</div>	<div>_____ Date</div>
<div>_____ Panel Monitor Signature</div>	<div>_____ Panel Monitor Name (Print)</div>	<div>_____ Date</div>

Competition Manager Signature

Competition Manager Name (Print)

Date



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0417GA-2 for Dodge County Board of Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	1
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>A clear vision for comprehensive and coherent reform through this grant project was inadequately described by the applicant. Although the applicant re-wrote four educational assurance areas from the grant application, details provided throughout the narrative did not support a clear and credible approach to the core goals. Restating the grant goals did not document or articulate how the applicant would accelerate student learning, deepen student learning, or increase equity through personalized student support. The applicant included statement of purpose for the grant project, however they did not include a vision for the project, thus the score is in the low range.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	7
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths:</p> <p>All of the schools included are eligible for the grant program. In addition, the applicant provided a list of eligible schools and details that 73% of all students participating are from low income families. The applicant provided adequate demographic of the selected sites to confirm that all of the schools were eligible.</p> <p>Weaknesses:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to include nine schools and all grade levels from three different school systems. The applicant did not include the process was to select all of the schools, if all of the teachers were included in the process, or if all students will participate in all areas of the proposal.</p> <p>The applicant did not provide adequate how students at selected schools were selected, thus the score is in the high mid range.</p>		
(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)	10	4
<p>(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Strengths</p> <p>A logic model was provided and the applicant provided multiple letters of support indicating the support of multiple stakeholders.</p> <p>Weaknesses</p> <p>The logic model provided is vague regarding short term and long learning outcomes. The model did not offer specifics regarding how inputs and activities aligned to outcomes. The inputs and activities provided were not consistent with the outputs and outcomes, for example, one of the inputs was a regional bookkeeper, it is unclear how this will lead to long term increased high school graduation rates or increased college enrollment rates.</p>		

It is unclear how or why the inputs, activities, outputs, and outcomes were selected as part of the plan for this grant. Mental health services were included in inputs, activities, and outputs, however outcomes did not include mental health results and seemed inconsistent.

Although many letters of support were provided and the applicant indicated that they indicated a high level of community support, no information was provided on how the providers of the letters were involved or would be involved in the grant project.

This section was scored in the low mid range due to the number of weaknesses.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)	10	4
---	----	---

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

Although the applicant provided clear goals for each school and how the goals were designed to meet or exceed state standards, some charts were incomplete and achievement gaps are expected to persist after the grant period.

(A)(4)(a) The applicant states that the LEAs' goals equal or exceed those set forth by the State's ESEA targets and that they were developed by each school system. Examples are given on how outcomes were modeled after state ESEA targets, however, the application states that school systems developed goals for each subgroup "when possible". It is unclear why each school system could not develop these goals or if the goals address equity issues. In addition, no details were provided on equity issues with regard to teachers to address goals.

(A)(4)(a) In some cases, changes in achievement levels on chart indicate that 2016-2017 post grant performance goals are below the results reported prior to the grant in 2010-2011. For example chart for Telfair indicates that the goals for ELL students post grant, would be lower than the 2010-2011 achievement levels.

(A)(4)(b) Dodge County School system indicated that reading baselines and goals were not applicable. This is inconsistent with the other school systems and it is unclear why Dodge County omitted goals for this section.

(A)(4)(b) Subgroup gaps would also persist after the grant period, for example 90% of white students would be expected to meet or exceed state standards in secondary programs at Dodge, however only 70.5% of Black students would be expected to meet or exceed.

Telfair did not formulate the chart consistently with the two other school systems, thus comparisons are difficult to make. It appears that although subgroup gaps will diminish, the goals are not ambitious. For example, subgroup gaps diminish but remain in double digit in many areas with some as high as 53%.

- No explanation is provided for the drop in baseline data between some schools in some areas from 2010-2011 to 2011-2012.
- Some performance goals for 2016-2017 would leave double digit subgroup gaps after the grant period. It is unclear how this supports increased equity.

(A)(4)(c) It is unclear how equity will be accomplished in graduation rates or with the goals provided, For example, Dodge County, proposed that by 2016-2017, a goal of 40% for economically disadvantaged youth and 43% for students with special needs, compared with a goal of 85% for the overall school system. This does appear to be an equivocal goal.

(A)(4)(d) None of the school systems set goals for college enrollment by subgroups.

Information regarding a planned purchase of a system to track college enrollment was provided, however it was unclear how the system would be used by each school system to increase college enrollment and post secondary degree attainment. The level of unavailable data does not support a record of success for the participating LEA's.

The application was scored in the low mid range due to missing data and goals that did not significantly diminish subgroup gaps.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	1

(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

One previous grant in one school division appears to have a record of success improving the grades students receive in academic courses.

Weaknesses

The assessment data provided indicated that the school systems often performed under state assessment levels over the past four years. This does not seem to offer a clear record of success in advancing student learning and achievement or increasing equity in learning and teaching.

A clear record of success regarding equity in learning teaching was not provided. No information was provided regarding equity in teaching.

The grant funded examples shared in the narrative provided inadequate information to assess whether the consortium had a clear record of success in improving student learning and closing achievement gaps.

Listing grants received by the school systems did not indicate if the schools achieved ambitious and significant reforms in persistently lowest achieving schools or in low performing schools..

Although the applicant indicates that each school system regularly disseminates student performance data and that classroom teachers discuss it, the applicant does not discuss how data is used to improve participation, instruction, and services.

This section was scored in the low range.

(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)

5

0

(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Weaknesses

Posting a link to state level official salary schedules via the internet appears inadequate to indicate a prior record of success for each LEA demonstrating transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments.

It is unclear if actual personnel salaries at the school level for all school-level instructional and support staff, based on the US Census Bureau's classification has been made available to the public.

Although the salary scale of all teachers if made available through the systems websites, it is unclear how the applicant has demonstrated evidence that the public, by school, has had a high level of transparent access to to actual school level expenditures for regular K-12 instruction, instructional support, pupil support, and school administration.

No points were awarded as the applicant failed to meet the minimum criteria.

(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)

10

1

(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Strengths

The applicant indicates that the state of Georgia encourages local school systems to implement personal learning environments.

Weaknesses

The applicant did not include evidence of successful conditions and sufficient autonomy with specific legal, statutory, or state regulatory requirements that address the applicants proposal.

It is unclear how Georgia's new evaluation system will be invaluable to the proposed initiatives or how they align with the project. The applicant did not include details to substantiate this statement.

Details regarding the personalized learning environment the applicant proposes are lack specific state level context.

Since evidence of conditions and autonomy under state legal, statutory, and regulatory requirements were not included in the

narrative, the applicant scored in the low range for this section.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

4

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant demonstrated support from stakeholders through letters of support, and used state comments in the development of the proposal, however evidence was sparse regarding how all stakeholders were engaged during the development of the proposal.

Strengths

The state provided comments and the applicant specified that the comments were used to revise and draft the final proposal.

The application was developed based on each school divisions strategic plan supported by several survey's that involved students, teachers, and parents.

Weaknesses

The applicant indicated that 70% of the teachers from participating schools supported the proposal, however they did not indicate how the teachers, parents, or students were engaged in the development of the proposal or how their comments were considered for revisions.

It is unclear how the student survey used supported the application. This survey is done annually for other purposes and does not appear to directly engage students in the formation of this proposal.

The applicant worked to develop support for the application, however did not provide evidence that all stakeholders were engaged in the application, thus it was scored at the low end of mid range.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

0

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

Weaknesses

The consortiums plan to implement personalized learning environments and the logic behind the reform proposal contained within the applicant's proposal was inadequate and not of a high quality. For example, although economic needs and gaps were provided, specific learning gaps were not identified for the students proposed to be targeted by this grant.

The applicant included demographic data from the target area and economic data, however the analysis failed to address a prior record of success that included needs and gaps through a high quality plan for the analysis of their personal learning environment. No demonstrated evidence that the LEA's has implemented a quality personalized learning environment plan or that they have a clear plan for implementing a personal learning environment was provided. The logic behind the reform proposal included only economic data thus no points were awarded.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	2
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
Strength		
The college and career readiness component of the the grant proposes to implement Georgia BRIDGE Act, a mandatory program that appears to be required of all schools in Georgia.		
The applicant previously recieved a grant that supported academic achievement.		
Weakness		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The applicant states that the grant was developed to address the CCRPI accountability system on a local level, however they state that this system has not yet been developed. The applicant also states that the grant will build on 		

the success of past grant funded projects, however a high quality plan for all students to be college and career ready by personalizing the learning community did not align to the unrelated initiatives detailed.

- The applicant proposes to provide a personalized learning plan through RTI screenings at the beginning, middle, and end of each school year. The three systems lack the economic resources to implement RTI for all students, however the applicant provided limited information regarding what a personal learning environment would consist of, other than access to several software programs, afterschool programs, and mental health services that seem unrelated. The action plan summary did not provide information regarding how the components of the grant would coordinate to equal a high quality plan to improve learning and teaching. No activities, timeline, deliverables, or responsible parties were references for developing personal learning environments.
- The applicant provided information on software and a STEM Academy, however they did not address an approach to learning that engages and empowers all learners, in particular high-need students, in an age-appropriate manner.
- The applicant did not address how parents and educators would provide students with access to a personalized sequence of instructional content and skill development designed to enable the student to achieve his or her individual learning goals and ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career-ready, A variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments; High-quality content, other than the several software programs mentioned. Ongoing and regular feedback, was not detailed in the application.
- The application did not address mechanisms that will be put in place to provide training and support to students to ensure they understand how to use the tools and resources provided to them in order to track and manage their learning.

The points are in the low range to indicate the information missing from the application.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)

20

0

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

Although the applicant documented that each of the three systems of schools will hire at least one instructional coach and that they have a system wide leadership team that will meet monthly regarding grant implementation, the applicant failed to address this section of the application. An excerpt from a previously funded state application was provided. This excerpt did not detail how this grant would meet the criteria for Preparing Students for College and Career Readiness (c)(2) although the applicant indicated that they would follow the state application model. No information in the budget indicated that the grantee would be funding an expansion of the Georgia RTI application or if funding through the previous state grants would support this section of the application. Since the applicant did not directly indicate what they would do through this grant, no points were awarded.

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	2

(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:

Although each LEA has a central office prepared to provide support to each school system and the staffing for the grant is detailed, the applicant has not developed a high-quality plan to support project implementation through comprehensive policies and infrastructure that provide every student, educator, and level of the education system with the support and resources they need, when and where they are needed regarding practices, policies and rules.

Strengths:

Each LEA has an organized central office and a consortium governance structure was detailed, including who will manage grant funds.

Weaknesses:

The applicant states that they anticipate the grant will empower them to provide the opportunities required by the grant relating to practices, policies and rules: to allow students to progress and earn credit based on demonstrate mastery, not the amount

of time spent on the topic; to allow students to demonstrate mastery of standards at multiple times and in multiple comparable ways; and to provide learning resources and instructional practices that are adaptable and fully accessible to all students, including students with disabilities and English learners are/will be in place. No past practices, school policies, or rules in the three division are provided to support this statement. In addition, these policies are not discussed elsewhere in the application making this level of autonomy appear unrealistic.

The applicant scored in the low range by failing to provide specific practices, policies, or rules that indicate they could meet this criteria.

(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	2
--	----	---

(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant states that they have ensured that all participating students, parents, educators, and other stakeholders, regardless of income, have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources, including appropriate levels of technical support. The applicant does not address the issues of providing resources regardless of income levels in any part of the application. For example, the three participating school systems use a web based student information system access able to parents. No system is detailed to address parents in these rural school systems that do not own computers or smart phones or who lack internet services, although earlier in the application, the applicant detailed that over 70% of the students attending the schools lived in poverty.

Although multiple technology tools were referenced and some teacher training for those tools were referenced, information was sparse regarding training for parents and students. It is unclear how parents will be trained to use Powerschool and how the parents can access information from the statewide Longitudinal Data System to make data driven decisions to improve student learning. Although the applicant stated that all three schools have access to SLDS, they did not provide details on how they used the data available.

It is unclear if the information technology systems allow parents and students to export information in an open data format. No information was provided regarding the use electronic systems that securely store personal records. In addition, the applicant did not address inter operable data systems. This may be a concern in a consortium of three school systems.

The applicant scored in the low range for failing to adequately address technology industries.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	2

(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:

The applicant proposes a continuous improvement process called the the Plan-Check-Do, Act Cycle. No evidence was provided regarding the rigor of this strategy or if it is a program already in place. In addition, no details were shared regarding how timely the process will be and how the feedback and results will be shared beyond local PTO and School Counsel meetings during and after the terms of the grant. This system appears to detail a system possibly designed for activities such as action research, rather than a school improvement process. It is unclear if this approach is appropriate for grant of this size to monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of the investment. The applicant did not detail how the quality of investments such as professional development, technology, and staff will be assessed, improved upon, and shared thus this criteria scored in the low range.

(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	1
--	---	---

(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:

A plan for a clear and high-quality approach to continually improve the project with strategies and engagement with internal and external stakeholders was not provided. The applicant shared that monthly meetings would take place and the project leadership would attend PTO and School Council meetings. The applicant also proposed general media opportunities. Given the high number of letters of support for the plan, no evidence was provided regarding how those supporters would be engaged or communicated with throughout the grant period. The applicant scored in the low range.

(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	1
--	---	---

(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:

Although the applicant provided 13 performance measures directly from the chart provided as part of the grant application, the applicant failed to provide (a) Its rationale for selecting that measure; (b) How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information tailored to its proposed plan and theory of action regarding the applicant's implementation success or areas of concern; and (c) How it will review and improve the measure over time if it is insufficient to gauge implementation progress. With the limited information provided it is unclear if the performance measures are ambitious yet achievable performance measures. The achievement measures were not segregated by subgroup, with annual targets for required and applicant-proposed performance measures.

The applicant indicated n/a for required performance measures in Chart (E)(3) section A. Wheeler County did not provide section C, None of the schools provided complete data by subgroups for high school students thus the applicant scored in the low range.

(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)

5

1

(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:

A high-quality plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the RttT District application was not provided in the application. The applicant indicated that they would participate in the national evaluation process and adhere to grant guidelines. No local plan was described that met the criteria for this grant although the applicant would have monthly meetings, use some free services, and they indicated that monitoring the quality and fidelity of the implementation of the reforms was important. Some information on a color coded system to address the status of each goal was included, however no information was included on what the applicant would do with the information. The section scored in the low range.

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
<p>(F)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant provided a budget and a narrative that identifies all funds that will support the project from the RttT grant. No district, or external funding from foundations, state or other federal sources were included in the application. The budget provided was reasonable and sufficient to support the development and implementation of the applicant's proposal if the grant is approved.</p> <p>The applicant provides a clear rationale for investments and priorities, including: a description of all of the how the RttT funds will be invested, and the applicant identified which funds were designated for one-time investments versus those that will be used for ongoing operational costs</p> <p>The applicant scored in the high range due to the detail provided in this criteria.</p>		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
<p>(F)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant proposes to apply for at least two grants per county each year to support the proposal. This effort appears insufficient based on the past grants received for a project of this scope and size. The applicant does not detail support from state, local, government leaders or other financial support. There is insufficient evidence that the project is sustainable. The applicant has indicated throughout the application that resources are not available for the activities proposed. Ongoing personnel and contractual costs that are not one time investments make sustaining the project with the limited plan provided unrealistic. The score range is low.</p>		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
--	-----------	-------

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: N/A		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Not Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: <p>The applicant did not coherently and comprehensively address how it would build on the core educational assurance areas to create learning environments that are designed to significantly improve learning and teaching through the personalization of strategies, tools, and supports for students and educators that are aligned with college- and career-ready standards or college- and career-ready graduation requirements ; accelerate student achievement and deepen student learning by meeting the academic needs of each student; increase the effectiveness of educators; expand student access to the most effective educators; decrease achievement gaps across student groups; and increase the rates at which students graduate from high school prepared for college and careers.</p> <p>References to Personalized Learning Environments were limited to RTI staff, not defined, and the applicant failed to integrate Personal Learning Environments with college and career ready standard, increasing the effectiveness of educators, expanding student access to the most effective educators, decreasing subgroup gaps, or increasing graduation rates or college readiness. Each school system had a unique plan and budget, however, a vision for providing a Personal Learning Environment was not an ongoing theme in the application and no evaluation plan was provided to monitor the implementation of a Personal Learning Environments.</p>		

Total	210	43
-------	-----	----

Application #0417GA-2 for Dodge County Board of Education as reviewed by Jill Gaitens

Signatures

<hr/>	Jill Gaitens	<hr/>
Reviewer Signature	Reviewer Name (Print)	Date
 <hr/>	 <hr/>	 <hr/>
Panel Monitor Signature	Panel Monitor Name (Print)	Date
 <hr/>	 <hr/>	 <hr/>
Competition Manager Signature	Competition Manager Name (Print)	Date
 <hr/>	 <hr/>	 <hr/>



Race to the Top - District

Technical Review Form

Application #0417GA-3 for Dodge County Board of Education

A. Vision (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(A)(1) Articulating a comprehensive and coherent reform vision (10 points)	10	2
<p>(A)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Although the introduction in this section (A)(1) provided by the applicant is unrelated to the criterion, it does provide a broad rationale for their application based on their communities demographic characteristics (i.e. rural, high poverty, low educational attainment...). There was little data that supported the statements made (e.g. 'large numbers', 'typical of similar rural areas'), and specific demographic information was not provided individually for the three districts that make up the consortium of this application.</p> <p>There was not a clear vision statement. Although the applicant says that they will "build upon our existing foundation...", the existing foundation is never described for any of the three districts.</p> <p>The applicant states in the narrative that there is a plan to address some of the needs, which were listed (i.e. universal screening program, resources to support RtI and the students served based on identification, additional instructional days, after- and summer- school programs, instructional coaches to support differentiating instruction, family support and mental health services, and career programming pg. 12), it is not made clear what districts, schools, population of students, have those needs, how the Consortium of schools had determined those needs, and how each of these needs were directly related to the four assurance areas.</p> <p>Other than the applicant listing the four assurance areas within the narrative of this section and making reference that the specifics would be explained further into the narrative, there was no specific goals defined for accelerating student achievement, deepening student learning, or increasing equity.</p> <p>Besides making a statement that there was a plan to implement personalized, student-focused approaches in their initiative, the applicant failed to provide a clear plan within a vision statement of how they were going to personalize student learning and address student academic interests.</p>		
(A)(2) Applicant's approach to implementation (10 points)	10	6
<p>(A)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) A narrative description of the <u>details on process</u> of how the applicant used to select schools to participate was not provided. The applicant did identify that the consortium chose to include all schools because they were small rural school with large percentages of students who needed the services that are proposed in this application. There was no evidence provided within this section of how the needs for services were determined. Documentation that the Consortium does collectively meet the competition's eligibility is included. For example,</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Consortium will serve over the minimum number of 2,000 students. The application states that 5,970 students would be involved. pg. 13. The table on pg. 23 reflected that same number. More than 40% of participating students across all participating schools were from low-income families. The applicant states the collectively, 73% of students fit this criteria. The table on pgs. 22 and 23 also show that the percent of low-income families range from 65% to 80% at the individual school sites. According to the documents presented as part of this application, the applicant has demonstrated its commitment to the core educational assurance areas by completing the "Applications Assurances" and "Program-Specific Assurances for Individual LEA Applicants." Application was signed by the lead LEA (Dodge) superintendent, and the local school board president. Consortium is made up of 3 LEAs identified as Dodge, Telfair and Wheeler County School Systems. The Consortium is requesting for all years of its project \$19,453.045, which is within the applicable budget range. 		

(b) A list of the names for the schools was provided on page 14 of the application. The Consortium identifies the number of schools to be served (9) and grade spans served (Pk-12). With the statement, "...we will be implementing and sustaining effective system-wide strategies, structures and systems needed to implement personalized, student focuses approaches to learning and teaching...", and "This initiative will involve all students..." supports that all schools and all students will participate in 100% of the grant activities.

(c) The application presents the proposed number of participating students (5,970), and also identifies that 4,348 of the participating students across all schools are from low-income families, and that this same number of students are considered high-needs. School Demographics Table (p. 22) was somewhat confusing. For example, the first line of data providing demographics for Dodge County South Dodge Elem. School, show raw data and percentages that do not calculate accurately.

(A)(3) LEA-wide reform & change (10 points)

10

2

(A)(3) Reviewer Comments:

The narrative section on pg. 17 displays a table labeled 'Initiative Logic Model Summary'. In the final lines of the narrative for Section (A)(3), the applicant refers to pgs. 85-86 to view a table labeled 'Action Plan Summary'. It is confusing to know which table should be considered as the "high-quality plan."

- Goals are assumed to be the the four Outcomes listed in the 'Logic Model'; the 'Action Plan' does not contain the goals.
- Activities are listed in both the 'Logic Model' and the 'Action Plan', but neither the 'Logic Model', the 'Action Plan Summary', or narrative text contains the rationale for the activities listed.
- The Timeline for implementation is listed only in the 'Action Plan'.
- The Deliverables are listed as Outputs on the 'Logic Model' and as Deliverables on the 'Action Plan'.
- The parties responsible for implementing the activities are listed as Inputs in the 'Logic Model' and listed as Responsible Parties in the 'Action Plan'.

The applicant does not make clear what initiatives have been tried by the three districts or what exiting programs are in place at the three districts. Without an analysis written into the narrative, it is unclear how the goals/outcomes were determined. The applicant's information/data provided in the first three sections was inadequate in determining if the goals were ambitious or achievable, and there were no measurable objectives or annual targets provided in either the 'Logic Model' or the 'Action Plan'.

The applicant lacks reasoning for implementing the activities (i.e. How is it expected that Social Services and Family Support activities will help LEA meet goals?), and it is unclear how the outputs listed would help in reaching the intended outcomes of improving student learning (e.g. lack of research mentioned, proven science-based strategies, etc.).

The applicant mentions a demonstrated track record, but it is not clear what that track record is for these three districts or how they plan to scale-up beginning with Pk students to a system-wide level of change that will produce college- and career-ready students.

(A)(4) LEA-wide goals for improved student outcomes (10 points)

10

3

(A)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(A)(4) Applicant states that the four goals of this project are aligned to the GA State's ESEA four targets.

(a) The applicant has set their summative assessment performance targets to either the same as the State's targets/expectations or above the State's targets according to how close they were to meeting the State's benchmarks. The Data tables for Dodge, Telfair and Wheeler did not provide the State's benchmarks/projections and the gaps in performance were not indicated either in the tables or the narrative. The applicant describes how each district's workgroup developed goals for the student subgroups based on the performance data, but details about how the performance gaps and the project goals were related was not described.

(b) Applicant refers to different annual goals for the different Districts, but goals to decrease achievement gaps were not visible in this section. Supportive narrative for how Telfair plans to decrease achievement gaps can be found within the data table (pg.37), but there is no such evidence shown for Dodge County and Wheeler.

(c) Graduation percentages are listed only in the tables, but there is no narrative that explains the rationale for determining the

increase expected. It appears the same increase across all subgroups is expected, but the applicant fails to align goals or activities with this information.

(d) The applicant refers to a new data tracking system needed to more accurately track college enrollment rates. There is no narrative concerning the goals for increasing college enrollment. The tables on pages 53-55 reflect various estimations of college enrollments.

B. Prior Record of Success and Conditions for Reform (45 total points)

	Available	Score
(B)(1) Demonstrating a clear track record of success (15 points)	15	5
<p>(B)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Within this narrative part of this section, all three districts were listed individually with the number of federal and state grants that they had received in the past four years. For each grant listed at each school, some sort of documentation was provided as to the success of the program.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Dodge County achieved 13 intended project objectives and partially achieved four additional objectives on a SS/HS grant; There was evidence provided as to the number of students who improved their letter grades and finding related to positive change of behaviors among students who had participated in the grant activities. Telfair County had also received a SS/HS grant. Like Dodge County, Telfair County also had the same type of positive student outcomes. Telfair also reported success with other programs such as Title IID/Technology grant, a Title IID STEM lab. With these funds, Telfair purchased digital technology <u>but neither qualitative or quantitative data was provided to support the success of these programs.</u> Wheeler County had been recipients of several grants including a Reading First and Title IID Technology, Innovative grants, and School Improvement grants. One of their elementary schools had earned recognition for Title I Distinguished School Award. <p>(1) Evaluation from the Dodge County SS/HS grant showed district-wide improvements based on longitudinal data (as reported by applicant on p. 60). Neither of the two other districts reported on any type of district-wide improvements. A record of advancing equity was not provided in this section.</p> <p>(a) According to the applicant, all three districts showed some sort of improved student learning that was linked to previous programs, but there was no evidence provided that these past grants helped in increasing high school graduation rates or increased college enrollment rates.</p> <p>(b) Recognition of the three districts in receiving State and Federal grants with recognized successes is noted, as well as the districts/schools within the district recognized for reform improvements made in low achieving schools (i.e. Wheeler - Title I Distinguished School Award for six consecutive years).</p> <p>(c) Applicant identifies sources used to make student performance data available to stakeholders and within the school staff setting.</p>		
(B)(2) Increasing transparency in LEA processes, practices, and investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(B)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>(a) The applicant describes how their schools' salary schedule is decided, but this section does not report school-level expenditure data.</p> <p>(b-d) The applicant states that the State's salary scheduled is used for all personnel. This section does detail where the information can be found via websites and State entity portals.</p>		
(B)(3) State context for implementation (10 points)	10	2
(B)(3) Reviewer Comments:		

Although the programs' outputs (from logic model) reflect the need for activities to assist with personalized learning environments (i.e. additional instruction days, before and after school programs, adding instructional coaches, etc) it is unclear how the State's new evaluation system is connected to this program's goals.

(B)(4) Stakeholder engagement and support (10 points)

10

6

(B)(4) Reviewer Comments:

(a) Applicant has provided evidence that the Consortia did have a process of how the proposal was developed.

- It refers to reviewing a guide titled, *Engaging Educators: A Reform Support Network Guide for States and Districts*, but the narrative does not describe what was taken from the guide and used during the development of the proposal.
- Applicant also refers to each districts strategic planning initiatives, which were designed by teams of personnel taken from each school.
- The applicant referred to getting input from a math, science, and literacy common core content specialists the the area RESA.
- The applicant describes how the students, families and principals in the middle schools were surveyed using a Health survey that identified risk factors, and a community needs assessment was also used to provide input in the proposal.
- The applicant identified the most valued means of designing a model to use was taken from an on-line survey given in September, 2012 to "almost all of the school system staff (365 from all three counties)." The survey asked participants to identify strategies that they felt would benefit students. The results shown on pg. 68 of this application were in alignment to the activities presented in the 'Logic Model' and 'Action Plan'.
- The Georgia Department of Education provided extensive and thorough constructive feedback to the proposal team. The application reflected some of what the SDE recommendations provided, but not nearly all.

(i) It is noted that the local school systems have local control and the consortium of districts included in this application does not have collective bargaining agreements.

(ii) Many pages containing teachers signatures following a statement of support were included in the application. The 70% threshold was met.

(b) Applicant provides an extensive amount of stakeholder engagement and support documentation as evidenced by the number of support letters included in the application from various local city and government entities, as well as public and private organizations. Although the letters were typically on business letterhead and signed by authorizing agent, they were generally a form letter describing their support for the Districts to receive the Race To The Top Funds, and were not specific to the nature of support that the organization was willing to provided to the Districts once they secured the funding.

(B)(5) Analysis of needs and gaps (5 points)

5

2

(B)(5) Reviewer Comments:

A high-quality plan that describes the applicant's current status in implementing personalized learning environments is not evident. Although the applicant describes a geographic area surrounding the three school districts that has many issues related to poverty, this proposal does not provide a clear picture of what a reform initiative/model would look like.

The applicant refers to former grant funds as being merely a "Band-Aid" to cover up issues related to the needs of their students; this proposal offers little evidence that these funds will be used any differently. A clear picture of what a personalized learning plan environment for these three districts is not described.

C. Preparing Students for College and Careers (40 total points)

	Available	Score
(C)(1) Learning (20 points)	20	10
(C)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
(C)(1) Learning		
(a)(i) There is little discussion on how parents provide support for these new or existing programs. There are no goals or		

measures mentioned to know if students understand that what they are learning is key to their success.

(a)(ii) LEAs plan to use a college and career readiness program provided by the State to the schools in Georgia, but the applicant has not addressed this criterion adequately enough to understand how this program will help their students learn and/or be ready for college or career.

(a)(iii) Applicant addressed a few content curriculums available for students in a digital format (Accelerated Math software and STEM Academy). It is not clear what schools/districts the program exist or is proposed. A strength of the Accelerated Math software is that it is science-based, but it's not made clear how it can deepen the student's learning experience in areas of academic interests. The STEM Academy is described as a more personal interests type of program, but it is for students in grades 6-12 only. The proposal is weak in describing what districts has/will have the STEM Academy. Although it's not clear that this is an existing program, the applicant doesn't explain how the RTTT funds will expand or enhance this program.

(a)(iv) Application fails to adequately address how students have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that would possibly motivate and deepen their learning. When describing the STEM Program, all of the components of a strong content focused is mentioned, but the proposal is not clear on how students will have access and exposure to diverse cultures, contexts, and perspectives that motivate and deepen individual student learning.

(a)(v) The programs that are presently offered, or proposed to be offered (e.g. STEM Academy, new Georgia State's College and Career Program), might allow for students to experience and develop traits such as teamwork, perseverance, creativity, and programs, but the proposal did not adequately relate how these programs would be embedded into the students' academic individualized learning plans.

(b)(i) The applicant is not clear on how a sequence of content will be laid out for a student to ensure he or she can graduate on time and college- and career- ready.

(b)(ii) The applicant has listed a variety of high-quality instructional approaches and environments such as STEM Academy and After school/summer program. It is unclear how these programs will be embedded into the individual student's learning plan (e.g. Will all students have to attend after-school/summer programming to receive these programs? If so, what is the plan to ensure that students needing these programs will attend?)

(b)(iii) Applicant provides sparse information on the high quality content and/or digital learning content this is aligned to the college- and career- ready standards. There is no evidence that shows that students enrolled in LEAs can accelerate their learning as far as move to the next grade level or clep out of a course using on-line coursework. Accelerated Math is discussed for grades 3-12, but it is described for the use for mostly identifying those who need intervention or personalized practice but not as a means to move to the next grade level or higher level coursework.

(b)(iv) (A) Applicant does a good job of discussing how student data can be/will be used to determine progress and student services (purchase StudentTracker, RTI, GRASP ATMSweb, assessments, etc.). (B) Assessments and benchmarks are presently used, so it is not made clear how the RTTT funds will be used to expand on what is already being done to support students' learning?

(b)(v) Applicant identifies strategies for addressing high-need students including both special education and gifted students (i.e. academic counseling, BRIDGE programming).

(c) Students entering 6th grade receive academic counseling to assist them in evaluating their academic skills and career interests throughout the time of their graduation. The completion of their "Individual Graduation Plan" would be evidence that the students is able to have input in their own learning (pg. 84). It's still not clear how this Individual Graduation Plan ensures that all students are on track toward meeting college- and career-ready graduation requirements.

(C)(2) Teaching and Leading (20 points)

20

4

(C)(2) Reviewer Comments:

(a)(i) The plan calls for hiring instructional coaches to provide professional development to teachers in areas of providing individualized instruction and research-based effective instruction. The applicant doesn't identify if "all" teachers in all three districts will receive this type of professional development, nor does the narrative describe how often these types of training will occur and in what environment.

(a)(ii) There was no mention in the application referring to teachers receiving professional development on "engaging students in common and individual tasks, in response to their academic needs, academic interests, and optimal learning approaches (e.g. discussion and collaborative work, project-based learning)." Among the list of what professional development the instructional coaches were to provide was technology integration, but how often and in what environment was not discussed.

(a)(iii) It was discussed in the previous section of this application that AIMSweb provides professional-development for staff. This involves webinars, on-site training and consultation services. It is unclear how often teachers are required to access the AIMSweb for professional development.

(a)(iv) Identify a strength to this proposal is that LEAs are using a new teacher evaluation system to rate teacher's on their teaching performance. The Domains include areas that are aligned to a plan for personalizing the learning environment. The application provides a list of the Domains to be evaluated on page 89. There is also a plan to support educators. Instructional coaches will observing classroom teachers and giving them feedback on ways of enhancing teacher-learning situations.

(bi) In this section of the application, describing how the participating educators have access to, and know how to use, tools, data, and resources to accelerate student progress is not addressed, but in previous sections where student assessments were discussed, the applicant referred to opportunities for teachers to learn how to assess and monitor students' progress. Because the applicant didn't respond to each specific criteria in the application, it is hard to determine how this specific criteria has been addressed.

(b)(ii & iii) The application failed to describe "high-quality learning resources" in this section.

(c) (i) Applicant provides an overview of the Teacher Keys Evaluation System and offers some discussion on how it is aligned to common core standards. The applicants does not clearly address what is asked for in the guidelines (e.g. plan of improving school progress toward the goals of increasing student performance and closing achievement gaps).

(c)(ii) There is no plan outlined for training on the KES system and Applicant doesn't discuss school policies related the KES system.

(d) Again, this section does not address what is being asked of the applicant to respond to in the guidelines (e.g. plan for increasing the number of students who receive instruction from effective and highly effective teachers and principals.)

D. LEA Policy and Infrastructure (25 total points)

	Available	Score
(D)(1) LEA practices, policies, rules (15 points)	15	4
(D)(1) Reviewer Comments:		
(a-c) A high-quality plan to support school infrastructure is not supported. The consortium is made up of three districts and nine schools. The plan of high quality should reflect a 'blueprint' (termed by applicant on pg. 13) of what that would look like. It should include a clear process of ensuring that ALL students, parents, educators and other stakeholders have access to necessary content, tools, and other learning resources, have appropriate levels of technical support, and allowed access to information technology systems to export information in an open data format. Some of these offerings listed above have been discussed to some degree throughout the application, but the pieces were never put into one blueprint.		
(d) The consortium has considered how they will manage by using a regional leadership team and central office support and services for scheduling. The lead LEA has experience with handling discretionary funds. Dodge County, lead LEA will be responsible for overseeing the administration and supervision of the grant. Each district is responsible to provide student information data needed to support the grant. The applicant provides an overview of the leadership structure and the project personnel.		
(D)(2) LEA and school infrastructure (10 points)	10	3
(D)(2) Reviewer Comments:		
(a) Although the applicant states that all stakeholders have access to necessary content, tools and other learning recourses, the proposal only discusses the infrastructure of the school that would allow the access. There is little reference to this same access from homes. It appears that if parents have the digital means such as iPhone or Android compatible phones that they can access the resources, but there is no data to understand what percentage of parents will not be able to access it and how the project will help them.		

- (b) The proposal describes a new CRCT data system that will allow teachers to more easily access students' data, but this section does not describe any level of technical support that will be given to parents and students in relationship to support for learning.
- (c) The proposal describes a new CRCT data system, but it only states that "schools and districts will be able to generate and download specific reports" and fails to mention that parents and students can export their own information.
- (d) Applicant makes assurance that the new StudentTracker and SLDS is in compliance with the FERPA and laws associated with privacy of information.

E. Continuous Improvement (30 total points)

	Available	Score
(E)(1) Continuous improvement process (15 points)	15	8
<p>(E)(1) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant identifies responsible parties for providing regular feedback on progress toward project goals and ongoing corrections and improvements (e.g. project coordinators will share in monthly regional leadership team meetings pg. 105). Applicant provides information on how this information will be shared publicly (e.g. PTO and school council meetings). The strategies to of how applicant will monitor, measure, and publicly share information on the quality of its RTTT investments is described. (e.g. "Plan-Do-Check-Act" cycle described as a four-step model for carrying out change.) This procedure is briefly outlined in the proposal, but there is not enough evidence about this process to consider it to be rigorous.</p>		
(E)(2) Ongoing communication and engagement (5 points)	5	3
<p>(E)(2) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The strategies described in the proposal for ongoing communication and engagement were sufficient in describing a clear and high-quality approach to continuously improve its plan. It would have been useful to know how the engagement opportunities (PTO meetings, council meetings. etc.) would have been organized to gather input that would help to support any adjustments and revisions of the program.</p>		
(E)(3) Performance measures (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(3) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>Measures 1 & 2: The applicant refers to using the new teacher and principal evaluation system but does not include in the measure even an estimation of the percentage of teachers and principals that they expect to score highly effective or effective during each year of the grant. The applicant fails to present (a) Its rationale, (b) How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information, or (c) How it will reviewed and improve the measure over time.</p> <p>Measures 3-12: The applicant provides data in the tables for increases in numbers and percentages of students performance and attendance rates, but again, the applicant fails to present (a) Its rationale, (b) How the measure will provide rigorous, timely, and formative leading information, or (c) How it will be reviewed and improve the measure over time.</p> <p>It's hard to determine if the measures are ambitious. For example, the measure that refers to graduation shows that every sub group in Dodge County has a goal to increase their graduation rate by 3%. For some subgroups, this may be ambitious, but for others it may not be ambitious.</p>		
(E)(4) Evaluating effectiveness of investments (5 points)	5	2
<p>(E)(4) Reviewer Comments:</p> <p>The applicant describes the progress made on each of their goals by using an evaluation model provided by the Georgia Department of Education. Although the applicant states that this tool will determine if their goals are met or not met, there is insufficient evidence that the tool will evaluate specific activities, such as those that are using technology, professional development for staff, working with community partners etc. A more thorough description of this evaluation tool is needed to determine how effective this tool is in meeting this criteria.</p>		

--

F. Budget and Sustainability (20 total points)

	Available	Score
(F)(1) Budget for the project (10 points)	10	8
(F)(1) Reviewer Comments: The applicant refers in narrative about having existing programs and services (RTI, academic counseling, AIMSweb, etc). It would be clearer to know what in the budget under personnel and supply categories are requested to be added (supplementing) to those existing programs. There is clear rationale made for each category. The request for \$19.4 million is at the top of the budget request determined by the number of students to be served. In the Training Stipends category, it is unclear how this money for college and university coursework is related to goals of the grant. Teachers attending college/university is not reflected in the narrative to be a strategy that is planned.		
(F)(2) Sustainability of project goals (10 points)	10	2
(F)(2) Reviewer Comments: Statement made by applicant to sustain the program by gaining support from State and local government leaders was weak. Additionally, the statement that all of the resources funded by this grant will continue once the grant ends without a detailed plan to do so is inadequate.		

Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)

	Available	Score
Competitive Preference Priority (10 total points)	10	0
Competitive Preference Priority Reviewer Comments: NA		

Absolute Priority 1

	Available	Score
Absolute Priority 1	Met/Not Met	Met
Absolute Priority 1 Reviewer Comments: Applicant provided a logic model within the grant application (A)(3) pgs. 16-18) as an attempt to reflect how the two districts would provide a personalized learning environment for all of the students enrolled in both districts. The applicant described how their leadership teams would work collaboratively to design a program that had activities and outputs that would result in improvements. The applicant provided an overview of a multi-faceted approach in addressing students' needs (e.g. screenings, RTI, adding personnel such as instructional coaches, family support mechanisms, career programing). The applicant explains how existing systems or new systems will provide teachers, parents and students information, tools, and supports that will enable them to promote learning.		

Total	210	76
-------	-----	----

Application #0417GA-3 for Dodge County Board of Education as reviewed by Jacque Canady

Signatures

_____ Reviewer Signature	_____ Jacque Canady Reviewer Name (Print)	_____ Date
_____ Panel Monitor Signature	_____ Panel Monitor Name (Print)	_____ Date
_____ Competition Manager Signature	_____ Competition Manager Name (Print)	_____ Date